AGRICULTURAL INTERESTS

METHOD OF HOUSING GROWING CHICKS

Growing chicks should be provided with a house that will give them a place to stay in bad weather and at night. No particular style of house is recommended, but it should be so built that it will provide ample ventilation, dryness, sunlight, freedom from drafts, and be so arranged that it can be cleaned easily and frequently.

The lumber from piano and drygoods boxes can be used in building such a house and when covered with ordinary roofing paper so as to keep out the rain, will make desirable quarters. It is suggested that such houses be built on the colony plan, so that they can be moved from place to place, thus providing the chicks with fresh ground to range over. Elevating such a house six inches above the ground will help to keep the floor dry, by means of the circulation of air, and such space will also provide shade for the chicks.

In placing the chicks in their growing house for the first time, it is best to confine them for several days by erecting a temporary yard wherein they can run for five or six days, until they learn where to return when the fence is removed and they are allowed their liberty. Care should be taken not to crowd the chicks by placing too many in any one house. When the chickens cover the greater part of the floor at night, it is an indication that they are too crowded. At such a time they should be thinned out and placed in another house.

Early chicks develop rapidly into provident pullets that replace the industrious hens as flock breadwinners when the molting season arrives. These early pullets produce in plenty during the period when eggs are scarce and hence high in price. In order that the late fall and early winter stream of eggs may flow to market uninterruptedly it is essential to jump the traditional barriers and hatch early and hence wisely.

When one has only a few chickens it is less trouble to purchase prepared chick feeds, but where a considerable number are reared it is sometimes cheaper to buy the finely cracked grains and mix them together. Some chick feeds contain a large quantity of grit and may contain grains of poor quality, so that they should be carefully examined and guaranty as to quality secured before purchase.

There are two systems in use for the feeding of fowls, in one of which all the feed is given dry and in the other of which one or more of the daily feeds consists of a moistened mash. For convenience they may be termed the "dry feed" and the "mash" systems, although in the dry feed system a dry mash is often fed. Dry feeding is used by many where it is not convenient to make and feed a moistened mash. The greatest advantages to be derived from the dry system are the saving of labor and the lessened danger of bowel trouble resulting from sloppy or soured mashes.

CHOICE SEED CORN.

Experiments conducted in many states have shown that seed corn from near at hand is best. This is particularly true in Massachusetts, where there is a wide variety of conditions and where neighboring communities, even, may show such a difference in soil, weather and other conditions that what is suited to one may not do so well in the other.

Corn which has done well in one community may not do nearly so well if planted in the next town, or even on the other side of a hill from where it was grown. In Massachusetts there are many varieties of corn which are strictly local and have been developed from long-continued planting in a very restricted area. By these continued plantings, year after year, of the same stock the variety has adapted itself even more fully to the local conditions and is probably better suited to the locality where it originated than to any other.

Some corn tests have been conducted for a number of years and the conclusion from them is stated as follows: Seed grown and selected on the home farm for a number of years has been equal to or better than seed from other sources. The results of the many experiments indicate that it is good farm practice to select high producing corn from the home crop and to take care of it so that it will be in the best of condition to germinate. From whatever source it comes corn should be tested before being planted.

The extent to which corn becomes adapted to local conditions is indicated in the results of experiments tried in Nebraska. The yield from home-grown seed was decidedly greater in every experiment, other conditions being the same in all tests. Seed from other states yielded 39.8 bushels per acre, seed grown in the state produced 45.6 bushels per acre, and seed grown in the vicinity of where the tests were conducted yielded 48.8 bushels per acre. In 24 co-operative tests conducted in Nebraska the average yield of native varieties of corn was 3?.? bushels per acre, while the average of varieties not native was only 24.1 bushels.

The Rhode Island experiment station conducted tests for six years, using 15 varieties. It was found that only one of these varieties surpassed the Rhode Island White Cap flint corn in yield, and when shrinkage in the crib was considered the native corn was found to be superior to all others. This white corn is almost universally grown in Rhode Island, where it originated, and it is perfectly adapted to conditions in Rhode Island. Tests conducted in Ohio showed also that local varieties did much better than varieties grown in other parts of the state.

DEEP CORN PLANTING CAUSE OF POOR YIELD

By P. G. HOLDEN.

One of the greatest causes of poor stands of corn is too deep planting in cold, wet ground. We should be careful not to put the seed down four or five inches when two inches will be better.

Often we get off the planter when making a turn near the headland to see how deep we are planting. If we find we are putting the seed down about two inches we think it is all right. We forget that when we get out in the mellow ground the planter wheels sink down about two inches and that in fact we are planting four inches deep. We should get off the planter out in the middle of the field, away from the headland, to see how deep we are planting.

We can plant deeper in fall plowed ground than in ground that was plowed in the spring. This is because ground that is plowed in the fall warms up more quickly in the spring. But even then there is less need to plant deeper in the mellow soil of a fall plowed and spring disked field because there are no lumps.

Spring plowed ground is colder and we lose out if we plant too deep. We should plant only deep enough to cover the seed well. If the ground is cold and wet we should not plant deeper than two or two and one-half inches.

Many people think that if we plant deep the corn will have a good, strong, deep root system. This is a mistake. Generally speaking, the depth of the planting does not determine the depth of the roots. There will be practically no difference.

The little roots that sprout from the planted seed are only temporary and soon die. The permanent root system always grows from the stem close to the surface of the ground.

An experiment was conducted to determine the difference between shallow and deep planting. Ten kernels were planted two inches deep. All came up quickly and produced strong plants. Ten kernels were planted six inches deep. Four came up several days after those planted two inches deep appeared. The other six kernels sprouted, but the tender sprouts doubled back—being unable to reach the surface.

BEES AND BRAINS.

Not much money, but a good deal of brains is required to make bees produce a maximum crop of honey, says Lloyd R. Watson, bee specialist for the extension service of Connecticut Agricultural College at Storrs. Many millions of pounds of honey will be lost this summer because of failure to have the hives full of young bees at the beginning of the honey season.

The conditions which govern the secretion of nectar in the flowers, such as precipitation, humidity, winds and temperature are beyond our control, but the progressive beekeeper will study these conditions in his own locality and strive to adapt his practices to them.

A universally serious fault in the spring management of bees, says Mr. Watson, is the failure to have in the hives at all times a great abundance of stores. As broodrearing progresses stores disappear with surprising rapidity and a shortage at this time means a serious reduction in the working force of bees ready to take the field when the honey flow begins. It is conservatively estimated that if fifty pounds of sugar could during the month of March be placed in every colony in Connecticut, the season's honey crop would be doubled.

FARMERS TO TEST LIME.

Forty or fifty farmers in Connecticut will get a chance this spring to apply lime to their farms at the expense of the Lime Association, a national organization. The association proposes to make tests of the value of lime on six or seven farms in each county in Connecticut and will supply the lime free, set down at the farmer's railroad station.

The proposition was made by the Lime Association, with headquarters at Washington, D. C., through Henry Dorsey, agronomist for the Extension Service of Connecticut Agricultural College at Storrs. Mr. Dorsey has arranged to handle the matter through the various county farm bureaus.

Any farmer desiring to take advantage of this offer should get in touch with his county agent and make application for the lime. Enough lime will be supplied to treat three or four acres on each farm. It is to be part of the agreement that the farmer shall leave a check plot of the same crops untreated with lime. At harvest the farmer is to weigh or measure the crops from the untreated and from the treated plots.

By this plan the Lime Association hopes to get results on the use of lime comparable to the tests made by experiment stations. The farmer will get the use of a considerable quantity of free lime and will be in a position to decide for himself whether liming pays on his own farm.

WHAT IS A BOY WORTH?

It cost the United States Department of Agriculture and the state agricultural colleges in northern and western states just 71 cents for each boy and girl enrolled in the Boys and Girls Clubs in agriculture and home economics in 1918. That the investment paid is shown by the fact that the average value of food products raised or conserved by these youngsters in carrying out their club work was $27.

Every county in Connecticut has organizations of Boys and Girls Clubs operated under the direction of the County Farm Bureau. These boys and girls are learning to be farmers and home makers. They learn to grow corn, pigs, and potatoes and to can, cook and sew. The money value of their work is considered the least important, but cash returns of $27 on an investment of 71 cents gives a practical ring to the proposition.

Girls Herd Their Own Sheep

"After paying all expenses, I cleared $1,249 from my sheep last year," reports Hazel Jeffrey, a member of a sheep club organized in Freemont county, Wyo. Several years ago she bought the first of a flock and has handled her sheep so successfully that this winter they number 103 ewes. In 1918 her flock produced 79 lambs, 76 of which she raised. These, with 7 orphan lambs abandoned by sheep herders, constituted the year's increase. All the care the sheep require is given them by their girl owner. This spring she plans with part of her profits to buy 25 pure-bred Cotswood ewes in Nebraska and use them to start a pure bred flock.

A girl in Sheridan County, Wyo., in 1918 cleared $823 with a flock of 48 ewes. During the coming season these two girls plan to throw their sheep together and to herd them themselves over the Big Horn Mountains. Orphan lambs discarded by other camps are also to be collected and cared for by the youthful herders. Members of the boys' and girls' sheep clubs in some of the Western States find the salvaging of "bum" or stray lambs an economical way of obtaining a start in the sheep-club work. fp

PLANT POTATOES EARLY

The earlier Irish potatoes are planted in the spring, the more they will produce. This has been determined by practical growers almost everywhere. It is probably safe to advocate the planting of potatoes a week or two earlier than they are generally planted. Some growers believe in discontinuing the so-called late plantings altogether.

PARTIAL SHADE FOR BERRIES

Currants and gooseberries commonly do better, especially in the southern limits of their range, if grown where there is partial shade. This sometimes can be provided by planting them between fruit trees. Raspberries and blackberries are sometimes planted between trees; but the practice is not advisable unless the soil is naturally moist and fertile.

PULVERIZING THE SOIL

Few gardners realize the importance of pulverizing the soil as deeply as it is plowed. No matter how perfectly the surface is prepared, if the soil is coarse and lumpy below the plants will not thrive. Large air spaces in the soil are a detriment, but a large number of very small air spaces in the soil are a benefit.

WHAT LIME IMPROVES

Lime injuries none of our common crops, but it appears to do no good directly for corn, millet, rye, carrots, buckwheat, or potatoes. But the lime improves timothy, oats, wheat, barley, peas, cabbage, onions, beets, cucumbers, clovers and alfalfa.

MANURE FOR ORCHARDS

Heavy applications of stable manure in early spring, good cultivation or anything that will tend to stimulate growth will be most helpful to orchards and vineyards that have suffered from winter injury.

HOGS GREATLY ENJOY SWEET CLOVER

Sweet clover is an excellent pasturage crop for hogs. The animals may be turned on the field the first year after sowing the crop, as soon as the plants have made a six-inch growth. From this time until late fall an abundance of forage is produced, as pasturing induces the plants to send out many tender succulent branches. Pasturing the second season after planting may begin as soon as the growth starts in the spring. If the field is not closely grazed the second year it is advisable to clip it occassionally, leaving an eight-inch stubble, so as to produce a more succulent growth.

An acre of sweet clover pasture ordinarily will support 20 to 30 shotes, in addition to furnishing a light cutting of hay. For the best growth of the hogs they should be fed each day two pounds of grain for each 100 pounds of hogs' weight. Pigs are very fond of sweet clover roots, and for this reason should be ringed before turned on the pasture. The tendency to root may generally be overcome by adding some protein to the grain ration.

STRIVING FOR EARLY BIRDS

The early bird—referring to poultry—not only gets the worm, but seems to have every other advantage over the one that comes late. Upon early hatching largely depends the success of poultry keeping, say specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture, who are now conducting a "Hatch early" campaign—one of the most important in the poultry program. Early hatched stock, they say, produce well-matured, vigorous pullets, early-mating pullets that the best production and greatest profit can be secured. Early-hatched chicks also mean hens which grow broody earlier the next spring, and these in turn allow early hatching to be continued to a greater degree when natural methods of incubation are relied upon. This campaign has been pushed vigorously over the entire country during the past year, and it is being taken up again this spring. Reports from poultry specialists and other sources indicate that early hatching is being practiced much more generally this spring than ever before. Fewer early hatched pullets were marketed last fall than in previous years, indicating, the specialists say, that poultry raisers realize the value of their early hatched pullets and have held them for their own use.

Hartford—Morgan H. Brewster, student at Phillips-Andover Academy, Andover, Mass., is spending the spring vacation with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert M. Brewster of Farmington avenue. He has as his guest Walter O. Pregant of Omaha, also a student at the academy.

"You say you are in love with Miss Dawes?"

"Indeed I am!"

"But I can't see anything attractive about her."

"Neither can I see it. But it's in the bank, all right!"—London Answers.

COLCHESTER

First Selectman E. R. Gillette has just received a new tractor engine which he will use on his farm. He also expects that he can use the tractor in repairing the roads in town. It is a gasoline and kerosene burner and has three speeds, forward and reverse.

Clayton D. Barstow of East Hampton was in town Monday.

Mrs. C. C. Barston and two sons have returned to Hartford after a week's visit with Mrs. Barston's mother, Mrs. Ida Wagner on Main street.

John Carrier of Westchester was a Colchester caller Monday.

Daniel Rogers and Henry Chappell of Salem were callers in town Monday.

Oliver Woodhouse lodge, K. of P., met in Pythian hall, Tuesday evening. The rank of Page was conferred on one candidate. One application for membership was received. After the work a light lunch was served, and a social hour was spent.

Mrs. Ruth Stedman and son, Morgan, returned Monday, after a week's visit in New York.

Henry A. Correll and Emil Commette of North Westchester, were in town Tuesday evening attending the K. of P. meeting.

Clifford C. King and Myron C. Peckham of Lebanon were here on Tuesday.

PENDLETON HILL

Rev. E. P. Mathewson began services at 11 a. m., altered time, Sunday morning. There was a fair sized congregation in attendance. Mr. Mathewson conducted the Sunday school review lesson making it very interesting to his listeners.

School was in session Saturday, to make up lost time.

Mr. and Mrs. C. Russell Cook, who spent Saturday night and Sunday at Mrs. Annie Cook's, found difficulty in getting their automobile through the snow drifts north of B. G. Palmer's.

Sunday afternoon and evening, Mrs. Jennie Thompson entertained Mr. and Mrs. ... and her husband, Lincoln Daniels, all from New London.

Mrs. Clifford Thompson attended Miss Clara Taylor's birthday party at Laurel Glenn.